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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1652**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 24 JULY 2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 29 - 2020**

**1652. Ms R N Komane (EFF) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

In light of the reopening of early childhood development centres across the Republic, what is the role of her department in ensuring that the specified facilities comply with Covid-19 regulations? NW2042E

**REPLY:**

The Minister of Social Development is the principal custodian of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 and has a legal and political obligation to ensure that all early childhood development programmes and/or partial care facilities are regulated as provided for in this Act.

The Minister of Social Development has in terms of the Regulations published *Directions issued in terms of Regulation 4 (5) and (10) of the Regulations made under Section 27 (2) of the Act: Measures to Prevent and Combat the Spread of COVID-19: Phased Return of Children to Early Childhood Development Programmes and Partial Care Facilities* issued published by Government Notice No. 762 in Government Gazette No. 43520 of 10 July 2020, that in particular apply to early childhood development programmes and partial care facilities as part her and the Department of Social Development’s responsibilities to ensure compliance with the measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 as set out in the Regulations.

Furthermore, the Department of Social Development has issued on 23 June 2020 detailed *Standard operating procedures and guidelines for an early childhood development programme and/or partial care facility that provides an after-school service on measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19.*

The department has further repurposed ECD infrastructure conditional grant allocation for 2020/21 which amounts to 61 million to support ECD programmes that operates in rural areas and townships; and serves poor children.

The Department of Social Development together with the provincial Departments of Social Development has a continued responsibility to monitor that early childhood development programmes and partial care facilities that have reopened continue to comply with the prescribed measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19. This includes providing guidance and advice, as well as ensuring, when needed, that the required steps are taken when any of these programmes do not comply with the prescribed measures.